

RIVER RAMBLINGS



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MAY 2022

LEAGUE PUSHES FOR TURNPIKE SIGN UPDATES

As you know, first impressions stick with you. The Florida Turnpike, which sees on average four million vehicles per day and at 365 per day, equates to huge first impression opportunities.

The Florida Department of Citrus has been the agency that has overseen that signage at the Florida Turnpike rest areas in promoting Florida citrus...particularly Indian River grapefruit. Through an initiative by the League, the existing citrus signs are getting a sprucing up to make them more visible for the commuters traveling the turnpike system.

The signage has been a fixture for three decades.

In the late 1980's, the League was successful in lobbying the Florida Turnpike Authority and the Florida Department of Transportation to allow the only stand-alone signage allowed on the Florida Turnpike. The signs, 14 in total, were placed before each turnpike plaza with seven south-bound signs reading "enjoy Florida orange juice" and seven north-bound signs with the messaging of "enjoy Indian River Grapefruit." The new signs will have an updated health message and should be in place by the end of June. The \$50,000 cost for the sign updating will last at least for ten years.

League EVP Bournique commented, "The Florida Department of Citrus has been very accommodating to meet our request and we appreciate their staff's time in tweaking the signage."

Florida Grapefruit.
Rich in
Vitamin C.

Florida Orange Juice.
Health Made Easy.

Enjoy
Indian River
Grapefruit

Florida Orange Juice.
Delicious.
Nutritious.

Florida Grapefruit.
Juicy & Sweet.

Florida Orange Juice.
Rich in vitamin C.

Florida Grapefruit.
Immune Support.

Florida Orange Juice.
Immune Support.

Florida Grapefruit.
Sweet & Tangy.

Save the Date!

TREASURE COAST GROWN FUN SHOOT

The annual Treasure Coast Grown Fun Shoot has been set for January 28, 2023 and is building into a must attend gathering. This one-day event will be held at the Vero Beach Clays and Shooting Sports and provides fun, fellowship and networking opportunities. It's not too soon to begin thinking about partnering with us. Contact Karen at (772-595-5026) or email (karen@ircitrusleague.org) for more details of how you can be a part of our growing event. There are various levels of sponsorship so there's something for everyone!



We are thrilled to welcome returning sponsorship commitments from:

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OAK LEAF EXTRACT TRIALS UPDATE

By *Randall P. Niedz, PhD*
Research Geneticist
USDA-ARS, Ft. Pierce

A formulation based on oak leaf extract and observed to rejuvenate trees back to economic productivity was developed by citrus grower's Travis Murphy and Tom Thayer. Multi-grower and USDA field trials initiated in 2021 used a modified version of the formulation reported by Travis and his team. The modifications were to accelerate the go-to-market availability of the formulation to growers. However, the rejuvenation effects observed in their field trials were not observed in the grower and USDA trials with the modified formulation.

The USDA has acquired the original formulation from Travis and has resumed testing. The USDA trial is being conducted at the Picos Road farm site and includes 122 trees made up of Minneola, Hamlin, Ruby Red grapefruit, and Valencia (5- and 10-year old). The trial is being monitored using the Gestalt Rating System being developed by Dr. Randy Niedz. All trees are currently rated as 1 – no difference between treated and untreated. To score a 2 rating – a clear and unambiguous improvement must be observed. A 3 rating is an extremely large positive effect that results in restoring the economic productivity of the tree. The USDA will use an unanimous consensus of Drs. Randy Niedz, Robert Shatters and Brian Scully, Steve Mayo (USDA Farm Manager), and Eldridge Wynn (USDA Biological Research Technician) to rate a 2 or 3.

UPCOMING EVENTS

***Florida Citrus Crop Forecast Release**
June 10, 2022 @ 12 noon

Florida Citrus Commission Meeting
June 15, 2022 @ 9 a.m.
At Annual Citrus Conference
Bonita Springs

Florida Citrus Annual Citrus Conference
June 15-17, 2022
Bonita Springs
Contact Florida Citrus Mutual (863-682-1111) for details

***Florida Citrus Crop Forecast Release**
July 12, 2022 @ 12 noon
(Season Final Report)

Citrus Expo @ Lee County Civic Center
August 17 & 18, 2022

Ft. Myers
<https://citrusexpo.net/registration>

Treasure Coast Grown Fun Shoot
January 28, 2023
Vero Beach

*The citrus production forecast is released at 12 noon but may not be available on their website until 15-30 minutes later due to transmission schedules. The USDA report should be available immediately after release and can be found at: <http://www.nass.usda.gov>



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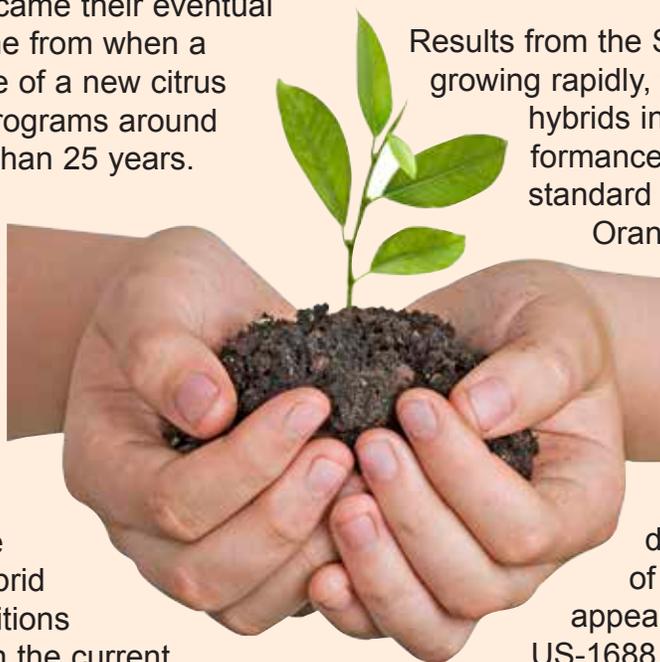
USDA SUPERSOUR ROOTSTOCK BREEDING NEARS FRUITION

*By Kim D. Bowman
Research Geneticist and Lead Scientist
USDA-ARS, Ft. Pierce*

The breeding of new citrus rootstocks is not an endeavor for the impatient. Two of the most popular rootstocks in Florida, US-942 and US-812, each were included in field evaluation for more than 20 years before they were released by USDA for commercial use. In these cases, the time invested in thorough testing paid off in what became their eventual commercial value. The time from when a cross is made until release of a new citrus rootstock from breeding programs around the world averages more than 25 years. Part of that time is the delay until the new hybrid can itself produce uniform seed which can be used to propagate large numbers of trees for field testing, and then for commercial use. An even larger part of the time needed is for suitable field testing of the new hybrid rootstock under field conditions with a grafted scion. Given the current urgency to find and commercially use better new rootstocks to battle HLB in Florida, the USDA rootstock program has implemented a SuperSour Strategy to create a broad array of hybrids likely to re-constitute the outstanding characteristics of Sour Orange, be tolerant to HLB, and also drastically accelerate the field testing of those hybrids in the HLB-endemic environment.

I began crosses aimed at the SuperSour Strategy in 2008, and the first SuperSour trials were planted into the field in 2011-12. At present, I have 16 replicated SuperSour field trials in Florida, including more than 350 different SuperSour rootstocks from a broad array of parental combinations. The trials range from the Indian River, to the Central Ridge, to the

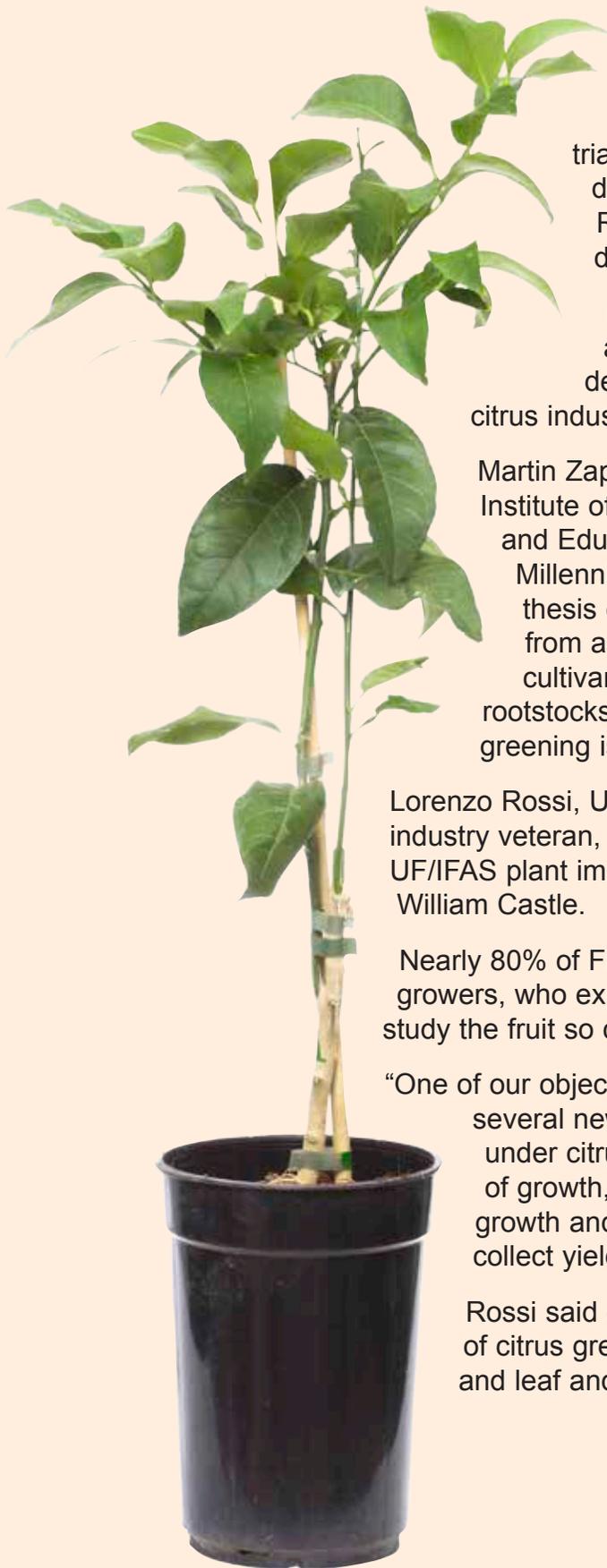
Southwest region near Immokalee, and all make use of sweet orange scion to provide a good comparison of results among the different trials and locations. As a follow up to outstanding performance with sweet orange, the best new rootstocks are subsequently included in trials with other commercial scions.



Results from the SuperSour field trials are growing rapidly, with some of the new hybrids in each trial showing performance that is superior to the standard rootstocks, including Sour Orange. One SuperSour trial in Ft. Pierce was summarized in my presentation at the Citrus Show in January, and demonstrates the promise of this approach. After four years of yield and fruit quality data from that trial, several of the new SuperSour hybrids appear outstanding, including US-1688, US-1709, and US-2338, and these are on a short list for potential release in the coming year. Comparison of results from other trials is an important part of deciding which of these new rootstocks are likely to provide the most consistent outstanding performance. Obviously, the best new rootstocks are those which demonstrate superior field performance over many years and also in many different locations. So the continuation of evaluation from the multiple trials long-term is key to identifying the best new rootstocks, and that will provide for the reinvigoration of the citrus industry in the Indian River Region and throughout Florida. I am grateful for the broad support from citrus growers and CRDF, and look forward to the exciting fruition of this work over the next few years.

FIRST QUANTITATIVE RESULTS FROM NEW CITRUS ROOTSTOCK SCION COMBINATION EXPERIMENTAL GROVE

Contact: Robin Koestoyo
Mobile: 772-453-0516
koestoyo@ufl.edu



Early results from a groundbreaking, large-scale citrus trial looking for solutions to the devastating citrus greening disease have given early hope for growers in the Indian River district. The new UF/IFAS research shows tree size does not seem to affect citrus susceptibility to greening.

In the trial, researchers are testing which citrus rootstock and scion combinations will tolerate citrus greening, a deadly global citrus disease that has impacted the Florida citrus industry.

Martin Zapien, a graduate student at the University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences Indian River Research and Education Center (UF/IFAS-IRREC), presented data from the Millennium Block citrus cultivar trial in Fort Pierce, Florida. At his thesis defense, the information Zapien represented was research from a 20-acre grove with grapefruit, navel orange and mandarin cultivars on a wide range of newly released and commercial rootstocks. Planted in 2019, the trees grow in a region where citrus greening is now endemic.

Lorenzo Rossi, UF/IFAS plant root biologist and Tom James, a local citrus industry veteran, supervised Zapien's research. Advisors on the project were UF/IFAS plant improvement team faculty Fred Gmitter, Jude Grosser and William Castle.

Nearly 80% of Florida's grapefruit crop is produced by Indian River District growers, who export their crop to Europe and Asia. That's why scientists study the fruit so closely, said Rossi.

"One of our objectives is to evaluate and compare the early performance of several new grapefruit hybrids grown on three commercial rootstocks under citrus greening conditions," said Zapien. "In the first two years of growth, we compared UF rootstocks and scions by measuring tree growth and the trees' ability to tolerate citrus greening. We expect to collect yield and fruit data after the third year."

Rossi said data sets were specific to tree size, CLas titer, the severity of citrus greening symptoms such as blotchy mottling in the leaves, and leaf and soil nutrient concentrations.

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“We have seen many rootstocks that promote large and small tree size, but we have not seen any correlation between tree size and susceptibility to citrus greening,” Zapien said.

But so far, the research does not support a theory that tree size affects citrus greening susceptibility, but there is a trend in small trees showing less citrus greening symptoms, Zapien said. Zapien said published research findings prove that high-density plantings produce higher fruit yields by increasing yield efficiency — fruit number per canopy volume area. The researchers will evaluate if the trees correlate with the published work or if the larger trees in the test grove produce more fruit.

‘Ray Ruby’ grapefruit on UFR-15 rootstock promotes vigorous trees — the trees show the largest canopies and are already flowering. But for UF/IFAS researchers to recommend a particular rootstock and scion combination, more data are required. The experimental grove must be examined for up to four more years before UF/IFAS scientists can make reliable recommendations.

“All trees in the Millennium Block are infected with citrus greening. However, some trees are thriving,” Zapien said. “Trees on sour orange have shown significantly fewer disease symptoms than trees on x-639 and US-942 rootstocks, but we have to consider that sour orange’s drawback is the susceptibility to citrus tristeza virus.”

As to citrus greening severity, ‘Star Ruby’ grapefruit showed only 4% symptoms in the tree canopy. In contrast, ‘US Seedless Surprise’ symptoms were 24%. The other varieties fall between the two.

“The data we compiled is nascent as the trees were only two years old at the analysis,” said Zapien. “University researchers will continue to monitor the top performer combinations to determine if the early findings are consistent.”

With research in the UF/IFAS IRREC experimental grove, Zapien completed a master’s degree in horticultural sciences. Zapien recommends that researchers improve sampling methods to assess CLas titer as the trees mature to advance the research. Zapien and his colleagues will evaluate flowering patterns to determine when the fruit is ready to harvest and reveal market windows. A long-term goal is to measure the yield or the amount of marketable fruit each tree produces.



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Three year grove report shows excellent disease control and strong root mass.

Grove sample	Propagules/cm3 soil		Root Mass (g)
	Total <i>P. nicotianae</i>	Total <i>P. palmivora</i>	
Replication 1	0	0	0.32
Replication 2	0	0	0.57
Replication 3	0	0	0.36
Replication 4	1	0	0.97

The treatment schedule was 3 applications per year at 2 gal/acre for 3 years.

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Looking for a way to reach our readers? Why not try our newsletter that reaches our grower members, packinghouses, associate members and affiliated businesses that make up the Indian River citrus growing district. Our publication schedule is September through June and is distributed electronically. Also, the newsletter is posted on our website of www.ircitrusleague.org. If interested, please call the League office at 772/595-5026 or email at info@ircitrusleague.org for more details.

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- When submitting logos, convert all fonts to outlines.
- Preferred format: vector eps

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- All pantone colors must be converted to CMYK.
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- PDF files and InDesign files are preferred (collected output to include layout, linked pictures, embedded pictures, color profiles, screen fonts and printer fonts).
- Other file formats accepted:
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As an associate member, you have access to most of the League's benefits and services. Associate members gain the opportunity to network their products, services, and information with our full membership. All associate members will receive:

- Invitation to association meetings
- Subscription to our newsletter
- Access to sponsorship opportunities, which enable your business to market its services directly to our grower and other associate members (newsletter, luncheons, The Florida Citrus Show, and our annual Treasure Coast Grown fun shoot to just name a few)
- Listing on our website (www.ircitrusleague.org) and newsletter

The Indian River Citrus League, headquartered in Ft. Pierce, was established in 1931 to protect the Indian River Citrus name and growing region that stretches from Volusia to Palm Beach Counties.

The League's responsibilities have expanded from the original purpose of "protecting and enhancing the Indian River name" to include a responsibility of voicing members' opinions at all industry meetings; to all governmental agencies as well as the Florida Legislature and Congress in Washington.

If you feel that a membership would be appropriate for your company, simply complete the attached application and return it along with your dues. Please don't hesitate to call, if you have any questions. Annual membership is \$300.

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If interested in joining our organization, please contact the League office for further details. 772-595-5026 or info@ircitrusleague.org

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